

Remarks/Arguments

In an Office Action dated February 8, 2008, the drawings were objected to; the claims were objected to; claims 1-63 were rejected under § 112, ¶ 2; and claims 1-63 were stated as allowable subject to the § 112 rejections. Applicants request reconsideration in view of the remarks below.

Drawing Objections

The drawings were objected to as not showing every feature specified in the claims. Specifically, it was stated that the second transmitting port and a device logic that includes zoning data storage, a comparison circuit and an action circuit must be shown. Applicants submit that such elements are shown in the present drawings.

Using claim 1 as exemplary, Applicants first reference Figure 1, which shows a switch 114, with the switch 114 connected to switches 112 and 116, storage device 170 and frame processor 115. Thus switch 114 is shown with four ports, where the ports connected to switches 112 and 116 and storage device 170 can be the receiving port and first transmitting port of claim 1. The port connected to the frame processor 115 can be the second transmitting port. Moving next to Fig. 3A, the Figure is a block diagram of a switch, such as switch 114. The Fibre Channel circuit 214 is noted. Fig. 4 illustrates the FC circuit 214 in more detail. Applicants submit that the FC circuit 214 can be the device logic. Applicants note the filter block 320. The filter block 320 is shown in more detail in Fig. 5. Applicants note the source CAM 510, the source group RAM 512, the destination CAM 520 and the destination group RAM 522, which can be the zoning data storage. Applicants then note the zone group combination logic 530, which can be the comparison circuit. Applicants finally reference Fig. 10D, which provides the output action signals and thus can be the action circuit.

Applicants respectfully submit that each of the elements in claim 1, including those stated as not shown in the Office Action, are indeed present in the Figures. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 1 and 34

The first objection was a suggestion to change “the external data devices” to include “plurality.” Applicants have cancelled “the” instead. This change was made as this portion of claim 1 relates to external data devices in general, not just the plurality of external data devices mentioned in the previous line. Applicants believe this format is less cumbersome than the alternative “ones of the plurality of external data devices.”

The second objection was a suggestion which has been adopted.

The third objection was a suggestion to replace “an external packet processing device” with “one of the plurality of external data devices.” Applicants have not adopted this suggestion as the external data packet processing device is a different element from the external data devices. The external data packet processing device is not one of the external data devices but is its own group. The suggestion would remove this distinction and thus has not been adopted.

Claims 5, 6, 37 and 38

Claims 5 and 6 have been amended to recite the plurality of external data devices for consistency with claim 1. The suggestion of the Office Action has not been adopted because the external data devices and the external data packet processing device are different devices and should not be confused.

Applicants have not made any changes to claims 37 and 38 as the language does not appear in those claims.

Claims 12 and 44, 23 and 54

The remarks made with respect to claims 1 and 34 apply equally to the objections to claims 12 and 44 and 23 and 54.

Claims 16 and 17, 27 and 28

The remarks made with respect to claims 5 and 6 apply equally to the objections to claims 16 and 17 and 27 and 28.

Section 112 Rejections on Clarity

Claims 1 and 34

The first rejection requests clarification relating to the use of “coupling to” and “connecting” and “connected to” in the claims. In general usage “coupling” is a less direct term than “connected,” though this is just general use and the use may vary in individual cases. The terms are generally synonymous, though “coupling” is used to indicate the general possibility that more items can be present between the two coupled elements and “connected” is used to indicate the general possibility that fewer items, often no items, can be present between the two connected elements.

The second rejection states it is unclear whether “a received data packet” is one of the received data packets from the receiving port. The short answer is yes, but the current language is used to distinguish more general and more specific items. The recitation of the “receiving port for . . . receiving data packets” defines the function of the port in general. The recitation of “a received data packet” is to particular data packets that have been received and provides antecedent basis for later claim terms. The receiving port provides received data packets in general, but the later recitation is to more specific received data packets so that the receiving port recitation is strictly not antecedent basis.

The third rejection relates to the data packets in lines 20 and 21 of claim 1 as an example. The first usage is “a data packet” as it is describing the general function of the action, not any particular data packet. The second usage has been amended to recite “the received data packet” to clarify that the received data packet described elsewhere in the claim is the data packet being transmitted to the external data packet processing device.

Claims 2 and 36

The first rejection requests clarity as to the antecedent basis of “the data packet.” Applicants have amended the first occurrence of the phrase to “forward a data packet” to clarify the general nature of the action as stated above. Further, Applicants have amended the second occurrence to “the received data packet” to provide clear antecedent basis in claim 1, line 15.

The second rejection requests clarity on where the data packet is forwarded and whether it is being forwarded to the first transmitting port. Applicants submit that the amended claim language clearly indicates that the first transmitting port transmits the received data packet so that it is implicit that the received data packet is being forwarded to the first transmitting port to allow it to be transmitted by the first transmitting port.

The third rejection requests clarity on the antecedent basis of the first transmitting port and the relationship with forwarding. Applicants submit that the antecedent basis for “first transmitting port” is clear and is the reference in claim 1, line 2, for example. The relationship with forwarded has been clarified by the inclusion of “received” and by the discussion above.

Claims 3 and 37

The first rejection is similar to the first rejection of claim 2 and those comments apply equally.

The second rejection requests clarity as to whether the first transmitting port not transmitting the data packet relates to the discard action. Applicants submit that the received data packet is discarded when the first transmitting port does not transmit the received data packet. Thus the non-transmission is the method by which the received data packet is discarded.

Claims 11 and 43

The first rejection related to the antecedent basis for “the data packet.” Applicants have amended the claim to clarify the antecedent basis.

The second rejection stated it was unclear where the received data packet was coming from to provide it to the second transmitting port. Referring to claim 1, Applicants note that the device logic connects the receiving port and the second transmitting port. Then the action determined by the action circuit is to provide a data packet to send to the second transmitting port. Then claim 11 adds that the action circuit uses a port number value to provide the received data packet to the second transmitting port. Thus, ultimately a data packet is received at the receiving port, becomes the received data packet, is operated on by the action circuit and is sent to the second transmitting port based on the action and action circuit.

Claims 12 and 44, 23 and 54

The rejections of these claims are the same as the rejections of claims 1 and 34, so like arguments apply.

Claims 13 and 46, 24 and 56

The rejections of these claims are the same as the rejections of claims 2 and 36, so like arguments apply.

Claims 14 and 47, 25 and 57

The rejections of these claims are the same as the rejections of claims 3 and 37, so like arguments apply.

Claims 22 and 53, 33 and 63

The rejections of these claims are the same as the rejections of claims 11 and 43, so like arguments apply.

Section 112 Rejections on Antecedent Basis

Claims 1 and 34, 12 and 44, 23 and 54

The rejection was to antecedent basis for “the zone configuration of the fabric.” Applicants reference claim 1, lines 2 and 3, as exemplary, which state “the fabric configured into at least two zones.” This is submitted as providing antecedent basis for “the zone configuration of the fabric.”

Claims 7-10 and 39-42, 18-21 and 49-52, 29-32 and 59-62

Antecedent basis was stated as missing for “the portion for at least one more of the source address.” Applicants have amended claims 7, 39, 18, 49, 29 and 59 to recite “a source address,” “a destination address,” “a Fibre Channel type,” and “a logical unit number (LUN) value.” This is believed to address the rejection and to provide antecedent basis for the claims depending therefrom.

Claims 23 and 54

This rejection states there is lack of antecedent basis for “external data devices in the same zone.” Applicants note the line above where the fabric is stated as being configured into at least two zones. This is submitted as providing the antecedent basis.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the acknowledgment that the subject matter of the claims is allowable.

Conclusion

Based on the above remarks Applicants respectfully submit that all of the present claims are allowable. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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